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VOLUNTEER COMPANIES.

There are few evils of a public nature more deleterious to the morals of the community, especially of the young, than the existing system of volunteer militia in this Commonwealth. The public expenditure for merely the wages and equipments, although probably amounting to some seventy or eighty thousand dollars a year, is the smallest objection of the philanthropist to this *novel* system.

Wherever a company of this description exists, there is a focus for dissipation in all its ruinous shapes. Meetings are frequently held nominally for improvement in military exercises, but in fact, for the fascinating pleasures which accompany them. Encampments, balls, dinners, suppers, attended with gaming, intemperate eating, and intoxication, not to name other gross vices, are more or less attendant upon these meetings.

There are other evils to which all the members are exposed. Those who escape the contamination of vicious indulgence, are still, in numerous instances, very great sufferers by the loss of time, taken from their regular business, and the expenditure of money which their pecuniary circumstances will not justify. How many faithful, affectionate wives suffer at home in painful solitude and distressing anxiety, while their husbands are revelling at the midnight entertainment, to return at a late hour, excited with intoxicating drinks, cross and irascible from losses and disappointments at the gaming-table, or by burdensome assessments, which so materially lessen their ability to supply the wants of those whom God and the laws of society have made dependent upon the fruits of their honest industry!

The late developments in the trial of Mrs. Kinney show up some of the usual attendants upon membership in these companies. In a small town, the existence of one of these companies is a blight upon its prosperity. Even admitting that in our cities, one or more of these companies may, at some particular juncture, be useful, of what use are they in other parts of the State? Because a hundred or two may by possibility be necessary, is that a sufficient reason for keeping up a body of ten thousand?

E.

The subject of militia and volunteer trainings, the whole militia system, calls for a thorough discussion; and we should like much to see the following topics exhibited in the light of common sense and Christian principle:—1. Is the system necessary for any purpose whatever?—2. Whether necessary or not, does it now do any real good?—3. Its legitimate, inevitable effects; its expenses in many ways; its waste of time; its suspension and derangement of business; the variety of its demoralizing influences; its tendency to keep alive a war-spirit, and thus to occasion wars in endless succession.